

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNITION OF CHESTER CONNAWAY

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize Chester Connaway of Jefferson County, Illinois. Chet was recently inducted into the Senior Saints Hall of Fame of Jefferson County.

Chet received this honor for his lifelong service to others. Upon his graduation from Mt. Vernon Township High School he joined the Army. He then served forty years in the Illinois Army National Guard. He now is the district director for Veterans Affairs Southern Division where he works to secure benefits for deserving veterans. Chet also is a member of the Field Grade School Board of Education and he served twenty years as treasurer of Wesley United Methodist Church. Chet and his wife Barbara have been married fifty years and have raised three daughters.

I want to congratulate and thank Chet for all he has done and will continue to do for the people in his community. He is a saint to all who know him and is deserving of this prestigious honor.

IN RECOGNITION OF SIDNEY BAUMGARTEN

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Colonel Sidney Baumgarten, in recognition of his outstanding service and dedication to the Military and the City of New York, and for his 25 years of service to The East Side Chamber of Commerce and to New York Therapeutic Communities.

A native of Far Rockaway Beach, Mr. Baumgarten attended Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where he was elected to the Student Governing Council and earned three varsity letters. After receiving his Bachelor's degree, Mr. Baumgarten attended New York Law School, where he was a member of the Law Review and recipient of an American Jurisprudence Award.

After attending Brown University, Mr. Baumgarten entered military service, attending Signal School at Fort Dix. He served for 18 months in Europe with the 7th Army Command and was awarded 4 commendations. As an active member of the U.S. Army Reserve, he served as Detachment Commander, Company Commander and Adjutant for the 99th Signal Battalion and as Material Officer for the 518th Maintenance Battalion. At an early age, Mr. Baumgarten began his lifelong commitment to serving in the United States military, and recently retired as Colonel in the New

York Guard, Chief of Staff of the Army Division at Camp Smith, New York. For his exceptional services in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attack, Mr. Baumgarten was presented with the NY State Conspicuous Service Medal by Governor Pataki in June 2002. Mr. Baumgarten has earned numerous other medals recognizing his service to the nation and the state.

In addition to his law profession and military service, Mr. Baumgarten's many interests led him to act as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Rockaway Cultural Society and President of the Regular Democratic Club of the Rockaways. He was also Post Judge Advocate of the VFW Post 1948, a member of the PAL Youth Council, and a director of the Queens Council on the Arts.

Professionally, Mr. Baumgarten was engaged in the private practice of law for 5 years, and was appointed Assistant District Attorney in 1967. As a member of the Appeals Bureau, he argued numerous criminal appeals before the State and Federal courts and expertly handled numerous cases involving prosecution of major crime figures. From November 1968 to December 1973, Mr. Baumgarten was Law Secretary to Justice Charles Margett, Associate Justice of the Appellate Term of the New York State Supreme Court and Administrative Judge of the Eleventh Judicial District.

Mr. Baumgarten has shared his expertise with colleagues as a lecturer on the subject of firearms and firearms legislation at the New York City Police Academy, and on the subject of appeals at the Queens County Bar Association and at Hofstra University School of Law.

In January 1974, Mr. Baumgarten was appointed Deputy to the Mayor with responsibility for programs and policies involving the Criminal Justice System, the Midtown Enforcement Project, gun control legislation, the Correction Department and many other matters. His expertise has made him a popular guest on many local and network radio and television programs including ABC News and the McNeil-Lehrer Report. His successes were recently recognized by former Mayor Giuliani at a ceremony to celebrate the revitalization of Times Square. The Mayor credited Mr. Baumgarten with closing more than 200 illegal establishments during his tenure as head of Midtown enforcement.

Currently, Mr. Baumgarten is President of Spectral BioScience Corp, a company specializing in advanced medical devices and serves as Board Chairman of the East Side Chamber of Commerce and Chairman Emeritus of New York Therapeutic Communities, Inc. He continues to lead and serve my community, tirelessly working towards the betterment of the quality of life for New York City residents and, indeed, all Americans.

In recognition of these outstanding contributions, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Sidney Baumgarten for his outstanding service and dedication to the Military and the City of New York.

HONORING STAFF SGT. WILBERT DAVIS, SGT. FIRST CLASS PAUL R. SMITH, LANCE CORPORAL ANDREW JULIAN AVILES AND CPL. JOHN T. RIVERO

HON. JIM DAVIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of four brave soldiers from the Tampa Bay area who lost their lives while serving our country in Iraq. These four men went to war to protect us and our liberty and ultimately gave their lives to preserve our inalienable rights.

On April 3, Staff Sgt. Wilbert Davis, 40, of the 3rd Battalion, 69th Armor, 3rd Infantry Division, died when his vehicle ran off the road as he was driving journalist Michael Kelly to Baghdad. A native of Tampa, Davis grew up in College Hill, pitched for the Belmont Heights Little League team, all the way to the World Series, and graduated from Tampa Bay Tech High School. A devoted husband and father of four, friends and family recall how dedicated Davis was to service. Joining the Army in 1985, he served in the Persian Gulf War and in Bosnia, Kosovo, Korea and Germany.

Just one day later, Tampa lost Sgt. First Class Paul R. Smith, 33, of the 11th Engineer Battalion. Also a graduate of Tampa Bay Tech, Smith knew early on that he wanted to serve as a professional soldier and raise a family. This husband and father of two enlisted right out of high school and served in the Gulf War, Bosnia and Kosovo. A man who is remembered for his dedication to the soldiers he led, Smith has been nominated for the prestigious Medal of Honor for saving dozens of lives before losing his own. During a surprise Iraqi assault, Smith died while manning a .50-caliber machine to fend off the attackers.

On April 7, Lance Cpl. Andrew Julian Aviles, 18, of the 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion, 4th Marine Division, was killed when an enemy artillery round struck his amphibious assault vehicle. A young man with an infectious sense of humor and a promising future in store, Aviles was the student government president of Robinson High School, played on the football and wrestling teams and graduated third in his class. A member of JROTC, Aviles passed up a full academic scholarship to Florida State University to enlist because he felt an obligation to serve his country.

On April 17, another bright future was lost when Cpl. John T. Rivero, 23, of the Florida National Guard's C Company, 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment was killed when his Humvee overturned on a mission with Special Forces. A computer science and engineering student at USF, Rivero grew up in Gainesville and joined the Guard in 1998. He was promoted to Corporal during his service in the Middle East. Friends and family remember his big smile and even bigger heart and talk about his dedication to doing his best at everything he tried.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

On behalf of the Tampa Bay community, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of these four courageous soldiers. These men shared a dedication to the ideals that have made this country great. Their bravery and patriotism makes us all proud, and we will never forget their sacrifice.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SAM
SUPLIZIO

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand before this body of Congress to honor a man known as Colorado's "Mr. Baseball." Sam Suplizio of Grand Junction, Colorado has spent his life playing, coaching, and promoting the game. As he retires from his position as Director and Chairman of the National Junior College World Series, I would like to pay tribute to this outstanding leader.

Fifty years ago, Sam was one of the top amateur baseball players in the nation. Following a brilliant collegiate career in which he became the University of New Mexico's first All-American baseball player, the New York Yankees signed Sam and quickly labeled him as their top prospect. As a minor leaguer in 1955, Sam hit more home runs than Roger Maris, and the next year the Yankees called him up to the big leagues. Unfortunately, only three days after joining the team, Sam suffered a career-ending injury while sliding into second base.

Despite the setback, Sam rebounded to become a professional scout, coach, and manager with the California Angels and Milwaukee Brewers. He coached superstars Paul Molitor, Robin Yount, and Bo Jackson, participated in selecting members of the U.S. Olympic Baseball Team, and earned a World Series Ring in 1982 with the Brewers.

While his association with professional baseball lasted 50 years, Sam always took the time to give back to the community. In addition to four decades of leadership with the Junior College World Series, thousands of little leaguers, high school, and college players in Colorado benefited from the free clinics Sam frequently conducted. As co-chairman of the Colorado Baseball Commission, Sam led the effort to bring the Rockies to Colorado and was instrumental in the building of Coors Field. He was so effective in that role that Colorado's Governor appointed him to help build a new stadium for the Denver Broncos as well.

Mr. Speaker, athletics teach our young people important life lessons about dedication, sacrifice, and teamwork, and I am proud to pay tribute to a man who has spent five decades imparting these values to our youth. Sam is a true public servant who has done so much for the game of baseball and the state of Colorado, and I am proud to honor him before this body of Congress today.

THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FOUNDING OF ST. PETERSBURG

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, in just a few days President Bush and President Putin, as well as leaders from a number of other countries from around the world, will meet in St. Petersburg, Russia for meetings on contemporary international political and economic issues. But at the same time, these world leaders will join in the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the founding of St. Petersburg. This significant milestone gives us an opportunity to reflect on the history and the significance of this key Russian metropolis.

The city was known as Petrograd during World War One and as Leningrad during the Soviet era, but from its very founding the extraordinary city of St. Petersburg has stood for Russia's Western-facing hopes and dreams. Russian Czar Peter the Great, St. Petersburg's founder, saw clearly that Russia's future lay in engagement with Europe, and believed that the creation of a Russian city with a distinctly European orientation was critical to Russia's development.

St. Petersburg was constructed as Peter's new capital despite the gravest of difficulties, a city that generations of Russians would toil to transform from a swampy wilderness into Europe's "Venice of the North." The effort to create St. Petersburg drew upon the Russian traditions of sacrifice and fortitude that the world would see and respect during World War Two in our common struggle against European fascism.

Since its founding in 1703, St. Petersburg has embodied Russian dreams of all their country could become. Under Catherine the Great the city became one of the grandest centers of science, culture and art in Europe, with European and Russian traditions converging to produce a uniquely Russian style of social and urban development.

St. Petersburg's Hermitage museum is one of the largest and most respected art museums in the world. Catherine the Great founded it to house Russia's collection of many of the world's most precious artistic masterpieces. Russia's intellectual class, rising at that time, also centered in St. Petersburg, attracted by the spirit of liberal development and progress.

Mr. Speaker, St. Petersburg under Catherine the Great firmly made claim to its reputation as a European city of substance, and Russians had and continue to have reason to be proud of all that St. Petersburg represents in Russian society.

The Soviet era again brought great hardships to the people of St. Petersburg, but without the benefit of the freedoms and hope that had originally been the cornerstone of St. Petersburg's appeal. As the center of Russian intellectual activity, it should be no surprise that Stalin's crackdown on artists and thinkers hit St. Petersburg particularly hard. To have lived in the heart of Russian intellectual life, the city of Pushkin and Dostoyevsky, and then to watch the forces of repression and intolerance take hold must have been incredibly painful to bear.

Yet the strength and fortitude of the people of St. Petersburg would before long be on dis-

play for the world once again, as Hitler's armies encircled the city in September 1941. Thus began a siege and blockade of the city that lasted over 2½ years.

Yet never did this city of nearly three million, including hundreds of thousands of children, even contemplate surrender to Hitler and his abhorrent regime. The treasures of the Hermitage museum were hidden in basements, protected by sandbags, and university students continued to go to school and even to be awarded their degrees. The famous Russian composer Dmitry Shostakovich wrote his seventh "Leningrad" symphony during the siege and it was performed in the embattled city.

Mr. Speaker, this spirit of defiance and strength played a key part in the allied victory over fascism, and earned for Russia the respect of the free world.

St. Petersburg has now retaken its original name, one of the first decisions made by popular vote among residents in 1991. The city has also undergone a massive renovation project in preparation for this remarkable milestone, to restore to its buildings their original grandeur and dust off the cobwebs of Soviet neglect once and for all. One of Russia's true national treasures, St. Petersburg is among the country's most important cultural, industrial, tourist, transport and scientific centers.

Today, Mr. Speaker, as in the 300 years of struggle that now lie behind St. Petersburg, the city represents Russia's sense of optimism, its hopes and dreams for its future, and its firm belief that prosperity and national development lie in a strengthened commitment to its relationship with the West.

It is in America's national interest to support this relationship, to give meaning to Russian hopes and dreams, and to see St. Petersburg continue to emerge as a freedom-loving and democratic example to post-Communist societies everywhere. I invite my colleagues to support Russian transition by doing everything possible to achieve these goals, and by promoting the peaceful integration of Russia into the community of free and democratic peoples.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and respect that I applaud the people of St. Petersburg as the city begins its fourth century on Russia's political, social and intellectual frontier. There is a history of sacrifice and of devotion to the principle of intellectual freedom.

St. Petersburg's tradition of academic debate and intellectual freedom is also America's tradition, and Americans look forward to continuing to share with Russia in this vital and productive institution. I invite my colleagues in Congress to join me in congratulating the citizens of St. Petersburg and the people of all Russia on the 300th birthday of this extraordinary city.

RECOGNITION OF CLARA SONSINI

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2003

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize Clara Sonsini of Jefferson County, Illinois. Clara was recently inducted into the Senior Saints Hall of Fame of Jefferson County.